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ELEMENTS OF A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE

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To talk of peace in times of peace is an agreeable form of speculation. To talk of peace in times of war is a solemn obligation. There must be preparedness for peace as well as for war.

Peace propaganda and discussion in the United States, while the world was at peace, or this country merely a neutral with the rest of the world at war, has been more or less academic and unprofitable. Sentiment has played a larger part than reason. There have always been earnest souls longing for peace—both spiritual and temporal. The horrors of war have accentuated these longings. The demand for the prevention of war, however, has become so fervid as to be hysterical. The cause of world-peace has been discredited, in part, by irrational denunciations of war, or ill-considered proposals for its elimination.

Now we are at war we should have a clearer mental vision. War is a marvelous stimulus to thought. It demands that we face honestly the great realities of existence. It does not allow us to linger in a fool's paradise. It compels us to test preconceived theories in a fiery furnace. They must undergo "ordeal by battle."

We have had too much academic discussion, not only concerning peace, but in regard to almost every other field of human interest. In law, education, sociology, politics and religion, we have indulged in arguments, subtle distinctions, and intellectual refinements that have obscured the most elemental, primal truths. We have been in danger of losing that primitive power—shared by savages and children alike—the power of distinguishing between right and wrong, justice and injustice. We have ignored the profound truth expressed by Montesquieu, that: "The sentiment of justice was created in man before reason itself." And war comes as a supreme corrective to this insidious academic anaemia. It hurls us into the center of the stupendous problems of the world. We are no longer onlookers and critics. The question of world-peace is now our own practical problem. It has ceased to be a

matter for academic discussion. We have a right to be consulted and to be heard. We are bound to discover, if we can, the final goal of all this horror and heroism.

What, then, are "the elements of a just and durable peace?" The very phrasing of the subject is in itself illuminating. What do we mean by *peace*? What is international justice? What is *durable* in human affairs? What are the *elements* that guarantee peace, justice and permanency among nations?

First of all, we should recognize that peace is not the supreme aim of society. Like pleasure, contentment, character and virtue, peace is only a by-product. It is a result. It comes to the individual and the community alike when men live honestly and justly; when they have fought with the beasts at Ephesus, and conquered the forces of evil. Peace comes through warfare with vice and injustice. The supreme aim of society is not peace itself, but the triumph of justice. And men often know peace only when they are actually engaged in the fight for justice.

Nothing could have been more infelicitous than the choice of the name of "The League to Enforce Peace." The enforcement of peace would be as abhorrent as it would be futile. The idea is as offensive as the so-called "pacification" of peoples by the armies of tyrants or conquerors. There can be no enforcement of peace, no true pacification where wrongs remain unavenged, and justice does not prevail. The true aim of all who desire peace should be, not the enforcement of peace, but the enforcement of justice.

Justice, then, being the final goal of society, how is it to be attained? In any association of men for mutual benefit, the first aim is to determine their interests and rights. They then seek to find the most effective way to protect their rights.

In order to determine rights, it is essential that men should share common conceptions of rights and obligations. They must think fundamentally alike. In order to protect their rights, they must have a direct control over the making of law, its interpretation and enforcement. Men are unwilling to abdicate entirely their rights into the hands of any absolute, final authority. The sentiment of justice is, indeed, a primitive instinct. Though torrents of blood must flow, men will never cravenly surrender the cause of justice for the cause of peace.

If this be true within a nation, how much more significant is

this same truth within the community of nations! We must never lose sight of the rightful aims of nationalism. Why do men group themselves in various national communities if not for the pursuit of justice? Nations, like men, demand the utmost freedom to attain this end along their own lines of preference. Is not the world vastly the richer through the intellectual, political, economic, artistic, ethical and religious contributions of free, independent nations? The basis of international peace must of necessity consist in the utmost respect for the right of nations to the fullest amount of freedom required by their legitimate national aspirations.

How, then, are international rights to be determined? We ought at once to recognize the profoundly significant fact that all nations do not share common conceptions of rights and obligations. It is lamentably true, as Maximilian Harden has pointed out, that the rest of the world is against Germany "because they do not think as we Germans think." Before we may attempt to determine the simplest rights of nations, Germany, Japan, the United States, Nicaragua, Spain, Russia and all the other nations of the world, must learn to think alike in fundamentals concerning right and wrong, privileges and duties, justice and injustice. Until men in free democracies are permitted to indicate clearly their national preferences, we cannot rightfully pretend even to draw the boundaries of nations with any certainty of justice. Witness Poland, Alsace-Lorraine, Schleswig-Holstein, and other disembodied national spirits—not to fail to mention Ireland.

If it has been impossible as yet to determine even the elemental rights of nations, how fantastic it seems to attempt solemnly to discuss the means of *enforcing* their rights! I do not mean to imply that there is no well-defined body of international rights entitled to protection. There are, of course, many such rights consecrated by usage, judicial decisions and treaties. In times of peace, these rights are universally respected and automatically enforced by the courts or the executives of civilized nations. Diplomacy, in ordinary times, pays unostentatious homage to these rights. There exist facilities for international justice through arbitration, commissions of enquiry, etc., though these agencies need to be perfected and augmented. It still remains true, however, that, until the basic rights of nations are clearly determined by their active, intelligent, mutual consent, it is folly to talk of coercion. There can be no just

coercion of men or of nations where there has been no clear definition of their rights. This is the bed-rock of international justice. This is the sure basis of international peace; rights must first be determined before nations may be subjected to restraint by international police or leagues of nations.

It would seem clear that the determination of the rights of nations is a matter of mutual agreement. They may not be determined arbitrarily by any one nation or by any group of powerful nations. This means, in concrete terms, that the victor in war must take care that he does not impose conditions of peace which violate the essential national interests of the vanquished. Arbitrary annexations of territory, and the subjection of alien peoples can only lead to other wars. Witness the criminal wrongs of the Treaty of Berlin whose baleful effects we are still beholding today! The utterly vicious principle of the balance of power which hitherto has dominated and devastated Europe must definitely be abandoned. Enduring peace can be laid on no such shifting foundations.

The participation of the United States in the great war warrants our insisting that it be ended in accordance with sound principles which shall guarantee the future law and order of the world. We cannot assume direct responsibility for all the complicated adjustments which must take place in Europe at the end of the war. We are bound, however, to determine clearly in our own minds, and vigorously to support those principles which should be obeyed in the making of peace.

These principles would seem to be, in brief, the principles of nationalism, self-government and freedom of trade. The instinctive desire of men to group together in accordance with their distinct national preferences, whether of race, language, religion, political traditions, social customs or economic needs, must be respected. This is fundamental. It is directly opposed to the archaic principle of balance of power. If men object that certain nations—Russia, for example—may be a menace because of their size, it must be conceded that greater harm has already come through the denial of nationalistic aspirations. Idealists, as well as statesmen, would do well to cease their opposition to the just claims of nationalities. The spirit of nationalism is a dynamic force which may not be repressed with safety. It need not be in opposition to internationalism, if respected. It will disrupt the world, if not respected.

The right of men to govern themselves is the second fundamental principle which must be respected in order to encourage enduring peace. If it should not prove feasible in every instance to resurrect dismembered states, and draw anew the map of the world, at least the right of men to govern themselves in autonomous communities must be conceded. Complete independence, though supremely desirable, is not an absolute *sine qua non* of nationalism. The concession of autonomy in local government, in Poland or Ireland, for example, as in Bavaria or Canada, would go far towards the contentment and peace of nations.

The third principle which should be observed, is that of freedom of trade. Tariff fortresses constitute a menace as well as standing armies. Economic strangulation, as in the case of Serbia at the hands of Austria, may be as insidiously effective in the long run as open warfare. The threat of the Entente Allies to continue an economic warfare against Germany at the end of the present conflict should be viewed with alarm by all friends of world-peace.

Nations will be compelled some day to come to a mutual understanding concerning the exchange of products. They cannot tolerate cut-throat competition. In many cases, such as Serbia and Poland, for example, freedom of trade with neighboring countries would be a necessary corollary to their right to exist as separate, or autonomous national states. One dislikes being classified as a radical. The logic of the situation, however, should lead us to recognize that nations, sooner or later, must not merely destroy their economic barriers; they must also come to definite understandings concerning the very basic questions of production and distribution. They cannot abandon protective dikes against the flooding of their markets by the products of cheap labor unless they first reach an agreement concerning the production and the distribution of these products. If this understanding is not realized, then protectionist wars will continue; nations will suffer; discontent will ensue, and then hate and war itself. There is a danger, of course, of giving too much weight to the influence of economic factors, in history, morals and politics. But we cannot afford to ignore, it seems to me, the profound significance of the principle of regulated freedom of trade as a necessary element in the peace of the world.

Most of the writers on the law of nations have placed great

stress on the so-called absolute, inherent, fundamental rights of states. Much of this discussion—particularly that relating to the sovereignty and equality of nations—seems academic. The right of a nation to exist, however, is the basic principle of international law. But this does not imply the consecration of an iniquitous *status quo*. Certain nations built up in flagrant denial of the rights of nationalities—Austria-Hungary, for example—can claim no absolute right of existence. National boundaries in many instances must be completely retraced before international law may properly be invoked in defence of an alleged right to exist.

The object of a great war like the present should be an enduring peace. And an enduring peace cannot be found unless it be based on sound principles. Such principles would seem in the main to be: the recognition of the rights of nationalities; the right to self-government; and regulated freedom of trade. If warring nations are not prepared to make peace in a spirit of equity and in obedience to sound principles, they must inevitably face the necessity of future wars. In such an event, it would be both futile and unpardonable to talk of perpetual peace.

To summarize briefly, the essential elements of a just and durable peace would seem to be the following:

I The necessity of common conceptions of rights and obligations, of justice and injustice among nations.

II The clear determination of the fundamental rights of nations in accordance with the principles of nationalism, self-government, and freedom of trade.

III The clear determination of all the other rights of nations by mutual agreement.

IV There shall be no collective coercion of nations by international police, or by any disguised form of international executive, before their rights shall be clearly determined.

V The protection of such rights must be accorded in such a form that there shall be no menace to the freedom of men to pursue their legitimate national ends.

Having faced squarely this stupendous problem that now confronts the United States, we should try to outline our immediate and practical duty in behalf of enduring peace. As regards the present war, we ought by every possible agency of speech and press

to make perfectly certain that the United States does not become partner in any peace settlement made in defiance of the principles of international justice. If we are permitted to make sacrifices for the cause of international law and order, we must be permitted also to insist that the final goal of all this sacramental sacrifice shall be international justice. We are bound to oppose with all our might a peace imposed on the vanquished to gratify the desire for revenge, for territorial aggrandizement or power. May we not consider the entry of the United States in this war as a sacred opportunity to mediate between ancient enmities, and to inspire in the belligerents of the Old World confidence in new invigorating principles of world-peace? May we not through the horrors of war thus accomplish the ideals for peace which we had vainly hoped to accomplish through peace?

Considering the problem of a just peace in its general aspect, irrespective of the present war, our duty would seem primarily to be that of helping all nations to understand each other. They must learn to sympathize and think alike before they can lay the foundations of durable peace. This is a gigantic task of education and conciliation. The agencies for this conciliative function are many, however, and include, especially, international conferences at The Hague and elsewhere to discuss the common needs and rights of nations. They include the various international unions such as the Universal Postal Union, the Red Cross, the Agricultural Institute, the Brussels Office of Customs Tariffs, the Interparliamentary Union and the Bureau of Arbitration at The Hague.

But we in America should be particularly interested in the upbuilding of so promising an agency for international peace as the Pan-American Union at Washington. Admitting the supreme difficulties in the way of world-peace, we can at least, as practical idealists, turn our attention to the immense problem of bringing about the reign of justice and peace on this hemisphere. Let us try first of all to bring about an understanding between the twenty-one nations of this portion of a distracted world. Let us induce them to gather together to discuss, recommend, and to legislate in regard to their common interests. Having found a way to determine their rights, we may then properly proceed with the other difficult task of securing the most effective agencies for the interpretation and the protection of such rights. We have in the Pan-American Union the

very agency for so magnificent a work. There would seem to exist no insuperable difficulties in the way of invigorating that institution, and giving it such increased powers of investigation, discussion, recommendation, and even of legislation, that it may become the prototype of that greater world clearing house for the advancement of the mutual interests, the rights and the peace of nations which all men desire.

In conclusion, we would do well to be on our guard lest the realization of the horrors of war should create an atmosphere of hysteria around this supreme problem of international justice. Horrible as this war is, it must not prompt us to recommend expedients for peace which might involve any fundamental denial of justice. We must remember that there are horrors of peace as well as of war. Where vice and wickedness flourish, where injustice reigns unrestrained, it is criminal to insist on enduring peace.

Furthermore, we must recognize that, humanly speaking, nothing is permanent. There can be no perpetual peace. It may be striven for only through eternal conflict with wrong. And to secure the triumph of justice between nations, men, at times, must be willing and eager to fight.

By an extraordinary paradox, then, war itself must sometimes be accepted as a righteous and an essential element of a just peace. Militarists, pacifists and all good patriots alike should fervently unite in the firm determination that so grim an element shall not have been employed in vain.

THE BASES OF A JUST AND ENDURING PEACE

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Peace at any price would be the abject surrender of justice and the abandonment of morality, and could never be an enduring peace. Peace at any price means the surrender of civilization, liberty, responsibility and self-respect. It means the exchange of a freeman's birthright for a villain's broth. In shame and humiliation we have to take an inventory of those individuals in our population that would make such surrender and would so barter. Rela-